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Title: Situation arising due to use of Harmful Pesticides, especially Endosulfan in the Country and their adverse impact on human life.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (KASARGOD): Sir, I call the attention of the Minister of Agriculture to the following matter of urgent public importance and request that he may make a statement thereon:

"The situation arising due to use of harmful pesticides, especially endosulfan in the country and their adverse impact on human life."

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. SANJEEV BALYAN): Respected Madam, pesticides play an important role in sustaining agricultural production in the country by protecting crops from pests and diseases. Availability of safe and efficacious pesticides and their judicious use by the farming community is critical to a sustained increase in agricultural production and productivity.

HON. SPEAKER: The Member has a got a copy of the Statement. So, you can lay it.

DR. SANJEEV BALYAN: □....*Pesticides are also useful in health programmes for controlling vectors responsible for diseases like malaria. However, pesticides have toxic properties and need a well ordered system of management and regulation which encompasses all important stages in the life-cycle of pesticides, *i.e.*, from import or production to sale and disposal.

The existing legislation for regulation of pesticides is the Insecticides Act, 1968. This Act regulates the import, manufacture, sale, transport, distribution and use of insecticides with a view to prevent risks to human beings or animals, and for matters connected therewith. Pesticides are registered under the provisions of the Insecticides Act, 1968 after a thorough technical evaluation of safety to human animal and environmental health. Pesticides are not likely to cause adverse effect on human health, flora and fauna, provided the usage is in accordance with the manner prescribed in the labels and leaflets approved by the Registration Committee.

The National Policy for Farmers, 2007 acknowledged that 'the triple alliance of pests, pathogens and weeds is cause of substantial crop losses every year'. The All India Report on Input Survey 2006-07 found that only 41 per cent of gross cropped area in the country was treated with chemical pesticides. The average pesticide application of around 500 gram active ingredients per hectare in India is far less than many developed and developing countries. Therefore, responsible and judicious use of pesticides is a *sine qua non* for sustainable agriculture and food security of the nation and global exports.

While recognizing the importance of chemical pesticides in Indian agriculture, the Ministry of Agriculture has nevertheless taken steps to promote more ecology friendly strategies for pest management. The Government of India has set up 31 Central Integrated Pest Management Centres (CIPMCs) in various parts of the country under the central sector 'Strengthening and Modernization of Pest Management Approach in India' (SMPMA) Scheme to promote Integrated Pest Management (IPM) in agriculture. The mandate of these Centres is to accord primacy in their activities and training programmes for Agriculture/Horticulture Extension Offices and farmers to alternative pest management solutions like pests/disease monitoring, production and release of bio-control agents/bio-pesticides, conservation of naturally occurring bio-control agents. The IPM approach permits judicious and responsible use of chemical pesticides as a measure of last resort. Several State Governments have taken initiatives to promote IPM in their States and have accessed funds under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana to support such activities.

The Central Government has taken other significant steps on this issue, some of which are enumerated:

1. Guidelines for registration and commercialization of bio-pesticides have been made less stringent as compared to those for chemical pesticides.

2. The safety of chemical pesticides are reviewed periodically by Expert Committees. So far 28 pesticides and some of their formulations have been banned/restricted from import, domestic production and use in the country. Currently a technical review of safety of 66 pesticides is being carried out. Approval for use of 43 pesticides on 111 crops have been withdrawn for want to Maximum Residue Levels.

3. The Central Government notified amendments in the Insecticides Rules 1971 to make Labels/Leaflets of pesticides containers more informative and farmer friendly.

4. Packages of practices for pest management in 69 crops have been reviewed and revised recently in an effort to align them with Good Agricultural Practices.

5. State Governments and stakeholders are being exhorted to support a 'Grow Safe Food' campaign centered around the five essential principles of judicious pesticides use – application of pesticides on the right crop, against pests for which the pesticide has been approved, at the right time, in approved doses, and as per approved method of application through training and media campaigns in Gram Panchayats and rural areas.

6. Advisories have been sent to pesticides dealers to promote responsible and judicious use of pesticides.

The Central Government has placed a complete ban on production, sale and use of the pesticide, endosulfan in the country on 14.5.2011 in compliance with an ad-interim order of the Supreme Court of India in Civil Writ Petition No.213 of 2011, Democratic Youth Federation of India *versus* Union of India and others. The matter is still pending before the Court.

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN (KASARGOD): Madam, I have been trying to raise this issue in the form of a Calling Attention from 2004 onwards.

Madam, I am sorry to see the reply of the Minister. He has talked about the method of pesticides, need of the pesticides, and the pattern of the

pesticides. The Calling Attention is regarding the situation arising due to use of harmful pesticides, especially endosulfan in the country and their adverse impact on human life. So, on the one side, the Minister has said about the pesticides that are being used, how they are stored and what their importance is. I have no objection to it because pesticides are, of course, important. But here the calling attention is about its adverse effects on human life. He is completely silent on that.

In our country, we have been using a large number of pesticides and most of them are coming from inside as well as foreign countries. I fully agree that there is need for the pesticides for the production of agriculture. In an answer given in this House on 31.12.2014, it was said that the total number of pesticides used in India comes to about 256. As per another answer, the pesticides formulation banned in India is 18 but now it is said that it is 26. The pesticides refused for registration comes to about 7. Pesticides formulation banned for import manufacturing comes to about 4. The pesticides banned for use but continue to be manufactured for exports comes to about 8. This shows the alarming situation prevailing in the arena of pesticides.

I do agree that there is a need of pesticides. But at the same time, many of the pesticides which are banned in foreign countries are still being used in India. It may be due to the pressure of multi-national companies for their benefit and profit. They do not care about our environment and health. Even these banned pesticides are recommended for use by some of our scientists in agricultural sector. I know it well. In 2011, in the Geneva Conference the endosulfan was banned due to a strong decision taken by the Conference. Even after that, some of our agricultural scientists – I know their names but I do not want to disclose them – who recommended the use of endosulfan and other pesticides also.

Even these pesticides are recommended for use by some of our scientists in the agriculture sector. They think about more production and more profit. Third world countries like India have become the experimental hub of these harmful pesticides. It is true in the case of medicines also. Many medicines which are banned in other countries are being used in India. It is only after a long time that we realised that these are banned medicines. How is that possible? When a pesticide is banned in other countries, how scientists or the hon. Minister could say that these pesticides can be used in India? What is the justification for that? Some of the new medicines are also tested in India. It shows the strength, pressure and influence of the multinational companies in third world countries like India.

Endosulfan was first found out in 1952 in USA. From experience they have banned this pesticide before 2000. Many of the African and Asian countries and other countries have banned this. In all, 83 countries have banned the use of this pesticide. In the statement of the hon. Minister it is mentioned that 63 countries have banned this. But 83 countries have banned the use of Endosulfan. It is only after a Writ Petition filed by the DYFI in the Supreme Court that this pesticide was banned in India. It was in the last Geneva Conference that India was forced to take the decision against Endosulfan but it was not implemented. Only after a petition was filed before the Supreme Court by the DYFI and on the basis of the verdict of the Supreme Court that this pesticide was banned in India. We have very terrible and shocking experiences.

I would like to refer to my State of Kerala. That is why I raised this issue. It is not my pain alone, it is the pain of thousands of people, young children, sisters and mothers. The Minister is fully silent on the issue of the impact of this pesticide on human lives. I am sorry about this. I do not know why the Minister has taken such a stand on a serious issue like this. My district of Kasargod and some places in Karnataka was affected because of the continuous use of Endosulfan in the plantation areas for about 20 years. This was used on the advice of scientists in the agricultural sector. The consequences were disastrous. Various studies have made it clear that Endosulfan is a deadly poisonous pesticide which affects human life and environment. It is shocking to note that the new born babies are seriously affected. Some of them are unable to speak; some of them are deaf and dumb and even our sisters could not go for marriage because they were affected either by TB or by cancer. Our women also are facing a number of deformities at the time pregnancy and child birth. Research and studies have revealed traces of Endosulfan in the breast milk of our sisters and mothers. You can well imagine how serious the issue is.

I can proudly say that cutting across party lines in my State and my district, we opposed the use of Endosulfan and before the ban of Endosulfan at the national level we could resist and fully ban the use of Endosulfan in the district of Kasargod and in the State of Kerala. It was man-made disaster to gain more profit and benefit. It was meant for the benefit of the multinational companies. The State Government of Kerala, the Panchayats, the NGOs and other organisations have taken some positive steps in this regard. We could make some changes to bring these people back into the mainstream of life. Representatives of the Human Rights Commission have visited the place and submitted their suggestions. 500 people have lost their lives; about 8000 people are taking treatment from various hospitals. The State Government has extended financial assistance and medical facilities. NGOs and other organisations are trying to help in the matter. But it is not possible to meet the high demand of the people. It is not possible for the State Government to do it alone. The Government of Kerala has already requested for an assistance of Rs. 475 crore from the Central Government. You may say that it is not your duty. The earlier Government also failed to give any money with regard to the assistance to the people.

I would like to place the seriousness of the matter before the Minister. The Report of the NIOH says:

> "Basing itself on the findings of the NIOH study, which in the opinion of its authors, continue to be valid and those of the Commission's team which, in December, 2010, looked at the problems that the victims continue to face, together with the advice of the distinguished medical specialists on its Core Group on Health, with whom it has urgently consulted, the Commission makes the following recommendations."

To the Government of India, it recommends that:

1. The Government should take administrative and legislative action to ban the use of endosulfan.
2. Conduct a nation-wide survey of the population that have been affected by the use of endosulfan, particularly sprayed from the air to determine the scope of relief and rehabilitation that may be needed.
3. Supplement the efforts of the Government of Kerala (and of other States) which need assistance.

As the victims are in large number, about 6000 at that time, in a small locality of 11 villages namely, Kayyur-Cheemeni, Ajanur, Pulllur-periya,

Kallar, Panathady, Muliyar, Karadka, Kumbadje, Badiadka, Bellur and Enmakaje, a Centrally Sponsored Palliative Care Centre/Hospital should be established for Kasaragod District and sufficient and effective ambulance services should be provided to all physically handicapped or mentally retarded victims with adequate and trained staff. The State Government should render all help to establish the said Palliative Care Centre/Hospital.

Madam, I am sorry to say that nothing is done in this regard be it by the earlier Government or the new Government.

In this regard, I would like to ask certain things to the hon. Minister. Financial assistance of Rs. 600 crore has to be given as an immediate relief because it was a decision taken and the Human Right Commission has also stated it. The endosulfan companies are responsible for using the poisonous pesticides in this area which affected a large number of people and environment. So, legal action has to be initiated and compensation has to be taken from them also because they are responsible for that. They have made these mistakes.

The Human Rights Commission has suggested for a Rehabilitation Centre in the model of Bhopal tragedy at the initiative of the Central Government. The Central Government has to take the initiative. I do agree that the earlier Government has not taken action. But it is your turn now to take action with regard to the suggestions of the Human Rights Commission and the NIOH.

With these words, I think the Government will take serious action in this regard.

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THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (DR. SANJEEV BALYAN): Madam Speaker, the Central Government has imposed a complete ban on production, sale and use of pesticide, endosulfan in 2011 on the order of the Supreme Court.

माननीय सदस्य यह अच्छी तरह से जानते हैं। कासरगोड जिले में जो इसकी समस्या आई तो उसके लिए पहले से ही वÂ◌ान् 2014-15 के लिए सरकार की तरफ से 3 करोड़ रुपये रिलीज हुए हैं। वÂ◌ान् 2013-14 में करीब 2 करोड़ 28 लाख रुपये और वÂ◌ान् 2012-13 में 5 करोड़ 36 लाख रुपये रिलीज हुए हैं। वैसे, यह रिहैबिलिटेशन का सारा काम हेल्थ मिनिस्ट्री देख रही है, यह माननीय सदस्य को पता होगा।

माननीय सदस्य ने एक बात और कही कि बाहर के देशों में कुछ पेस्टीसाइड्स बैन हो जाते हैं, पर यहां नहीं होते तो मैं उन्हें बताना चाहता हूं कि किसी भी देश में किसी पेस्टीसाइड के बैन होने का यह मतलब नहीं है कि हम भी तुरंत उसे बैन करें। हमारा अपना सिस्टम है। अभी जो 66 पेस्टीसाइड्स बाहर के देशों में बैन हैं, उनके लिए हमारे यहां एक कमेटी बनी हुई है। कमेटी की रिपोर्ट आने वाली है। अगर कमेटी रिपोर्ट देती है कि यह पेस्टीसाइड बैन होना चाहिए, तो वह यहां बैन होगा। पेस्टीसाइड्स को बैन करने के लिए हर देश के अपने अलग-अलग तरीके हैं।

माननीय सदस्य ने इंडोसल्फान की बात की है तो मैं इसमें यही कह सकता हूं कि वह वÂ◌ान् 2011 से भारत में बैन है।

**माननीय अध्यक्ष :** धन्यवाद।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

**माननीय अध्यक्ष :** अब हो गया। माननीय सदस्य, आप बैठिए।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

**माननीय अध्यक्ष :** आप क्या कर रहे हैं? आप बैठिए।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

**माननीय अध्यक्ष :** आप क्या कर रहे हैं?

â€¦(व्यवधान)

**माननीय अध्यक्ष :** सभी के प्रश्न नहीं होते हैं।

â€¦(व्यवधान)

SHRI P. KARUNAKARAN : I want to get a clarification from the Minister whether the Government is ready to accept the suggestions made by the State Government to give financial assistance or a special package and also the Human Commission's recommendations to have a rehabilitation centre in Kasargod itself. On these two issues I want to get clarification from the Government.

**डॉ. संजीव बालियान :** अध्यक्ष महोदया, जो केरल सरकार के पैकेज का विÂ◌ाय है, वह हेल्थ मिनिस्ट्री के अंडर पेंडिंग पड़ा हुआ है। इस बात का जवाब मैं हेल्थ मिनिस्ट्री से लेकर ही उनको दे सकता हूं। यह पैकेज कृÂ◌ाि मंत्रालय के तहत नहीं आता है। ...(व्यवधान)

[Placed in Library, See No. LT 2037/16/15.]

**12.21 hrs.**